2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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184 764 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have [578] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos *in less dramatic ways, too*, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration [123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 796 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 796 648 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris, Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutəbis of Təŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Təŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutəbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common